

[20th August 1925]

Director of Public Health makes any recommendation for carrying out improvements, may I know whether the Government intend to take any direct action in the matter? "

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—" I shall consider the suggestion made by the hon. Member."

Working hours, etc., of labourers.

* 209 Q.—Mr. J. A. SALDANHA : Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state, with reference to the answer given to question No. 683 on 27th March 1925, volume XXIII, page 779,—

(a) how many days in a month and for how many hours a day on the average the labourers work ;

(b) whether cottages or huts are provided for such labourers at the cost of the employers ;

(c) if so, how much accommodation is provided for each labourer with or without family ;

(d) what arrangements are made in the several plantations for the medical treatment of the labourers and at whose cost ; and

(e) if answers on these points cannot be given without calling for elaborate statistics from several plantations, whether Government will be pleased to collect them as soon as convenient for being placed before the House?

A.—(a) The Government have no information as to the number of days the labourers work in a month. They work for eight or nine hours a day.

(b) Yes.

(c) Four persons are usually accommodated in a room 12 ft. × 12 ft. Each family is given a separate room.

(d) In some of the larger estates hospitals and dispensaries are provided, while smaller estates utilize the institutions in the adjoining estates. The labourers are given treatment at the cost of the plantations.

(e) Does not arise.

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" May I know whether the Government have made any rules with regard to the provision of cottages or huts for the coolies? "

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—" The Government have made rules and the fixing of 12 × 12 feet as the dimension of each room satisfies the rules."

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—" The Government think that a room of 12 × 12 feet will satisfy the needs of four persons."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" Is there any rule that if the number of persons in a family exceeds 4, they are given more than one room? "

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—" Sometimes."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—" May I know why sometimes it is done and sometimes it is not? "

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The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"It is left entirely to the discretion of the authorities of the plantations."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—"Unfortunately there is no Government responsibility. The officer who should be made responsible is the officer in charge of these plantations. I know the Labour Commissioner is in charge and he is responsible to this report. The District Health Officer is sometimes responsible. What I say is that unless there is a rule that anybody can do anything, it is clear that a room of 12 feet \times 12 feet will not do for a family which consists of more than four persons. There should be a rule made that if a family consists of more than four persons, a room bigger than 12 \times 12 feet should be given to that family."

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"I shall consider the question and frame such rules as are necessary."

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—"12 \times 12 feet works out 3 \times 3 feet for each individual if we take the number of persons as 4. Most of the labourers are well built and I do not know how a room measuring 12 \times 12 feet will accommodate four such persons."

Mr. R. VEERIAN :—"May I know whether the labourers working in the plantations of the Coimbatore and Nilgiris districts are put in one big room like cattle?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"The Government have no information. The Labour Commissioner has inspected these places and made this report."

Mr. J. A. SALDANHA :—"May I know which Labour Commissioner inspected these places?"

The hon. Khan Bahadur MUHAMMAD USMAN SAHIB Bahadur :—"I think the present Labour Commissioner."

Supervision of the work of Commissioners for workmen's compensation.

* 210 Q.—Mr. J. A. SALDANHA : Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(a) what supervision the Local Government exercises over the work of the Commissioner or Commissioners for workmen's compensation appointed under the Workmen's Compensation Act;

(b) how many cases under section 19 of the Act have been disposed of by the Commissioner or Commissioners in this Presidency for the nine months ending with 31st March 1925 (which may be shown in the form of a statement with the several amounts of compensation settled or total of such amounts); and

(c) the amount of fees paid for the proceedings for the period of nine months ending with 31st March 1925 according to the scale fixed in G.O. No. 2083, Law (General), dated 18th July 1924 (*Fort St. George Gazette* for July 22, 1924, Part I)?

A.—(a) The Local Government appoint the Commissioner under the Act. They obtain an annual report from him on the working of the Act.